

**EST 574 - 30, Distance Education and Virtual Environments
Summer 2017**

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Web-based distance learning applications are quickly growing within higher education institutions, K-12 schools, and corporate environments. The focus of this course is on the underlying theories, design, and implementation of effective modes of e-learning. Students will explore virtual schools, virtual learning, virtual environments and other forms of distance education. The social differences between face-to-face and virtual learning will also be examined and discussed throughout the course. Students will explore virtual learning resources and design their own virtual course. The culminating project will be the demonstration and write up of the experience.

Learning Goals:

- Understand the conditions of virtual/online learning - cost, infrastructure, language culture, time zone, geography, and technical issues
- Learn a variety of online learning resources
- Design and develop an open online course prototype (MOOC)
- Get to know virtual learning networks - educators, peers, experts, professionals
- Become familiar with MMOs, Second Life, Virtual Communities and their role in education

Course Format:

Textbook will be studied in Bb Discussions that will be opened every Tuesday and closed on Saturday. Assignments are due on Mondays. Optional webinars will be held online in various web conference environments at the time convenient for everybody.

- **Required Reading:** Simonson, M, Smaldino, S Albright, M Zvacek, S, Teaching and Learning at a Distance, Foundations of Distance Education, Sixth Edition, Information Age Publishing, 2014, ISBN # 13: 978-1623967987 [Fourth edition](#) is available online.
 - **Optional Reading:** Aldrich, C. Learning Online with Games, Simulations, and Virtual Worlds, Jossey-Bass, 2009, ISBN 978-0-470-43834-3
- Rice, K. Making the move to K-12 Online Teaching: Research-Based Strategies and Practices, Pearson, 2012, ISBN-13: 978-0-13-210761-7 [Ch.1](#) is available online.
- Blackboard Course Sites MOOC: [Learning Objects and Authoring Tools](#)

Course Assessment:

Weekly Blackboard Discussions	25% (5% each)
Weekly Homework Assignments	25% (5% each)
Course Presentation	25%
Term Paper	25%

Weekly Blackboard Discussion on assigned textbook readings (closed by 11:59pm on Saturday): For help please watch the video on [how to use Blackboard discussions](#).

You will be expected to “actively” participate in all group discussions and you must be “present” within Blackboard to receive full credit for Blackboard participation.

Active participation means providing meaningful expression and well thought out answers to my questions. A short answer like “I agree or disagree” does not constitute meaningful dialogue and will not be counted toward your participation grade. The only way I can determine if you are present is if you participate online. Participation means posting an answer to each of my discussion questions and responding to other students’ postings.

The student who actively participates and adds relevant content to the discussion during the entire period will receive full credit. I will not count any posting made after the discussions’ ending date.

You will be expected to work collaboratively with classmates, argue and debate key issues in group discussions, and use students as well as instructors as learning resources.

Weekly Homework Assignments:

Weekly written Assignment (report on your course creation), must be submitted via Blackboard by 11:59 pm on Monday (1 – 2 pages).

As Blackboard timestamps submissions, this will allow me to keep track of what has been submitted when. HW should be saved as a .pdf. For each assignment, please use the following naming convention: LastName_Assignment#. Do not email me assignments without my permission. You can post your assignments by clicking on the “assignment” tab under the course, and clicking the appropriate assignment. Please make sure you submit your assignment with plenty of time, so that you have time to resolve any technical issues BEFORE your assignment is considered late.

Final Project Presentation:

You will be asked to design and present a prototype of a distance education course using CourseSites Learning Management System by Blackboard
<https://www.coursesites.com/webapps/Bb-sites-course-creation-BBLEARN/pages/index.html>

For the final project, create a top-level design for a distance education course for a topic that you teach, or are knowledgeable about. Develop the operational prototype of the course online. This should be described in a 4-5 page course proposal, and accompanied by a PowerPoint summarizing your proposal, which you will present in online class.

Term Paper: Evaluate and compare 2 to 3 E-Learning or Distance Education technological tools from the perspective of the student, the instructor and the administrator (5 – 10 pages).

COMPUTING YOUR GRADE

To compute your final course grade, sum up all points earned. For example, if you participated in 4 Bb discussions (20 points), submitted 4 assignments with grades 5, 4, 4, 4, 5, made a presentation with grade 20 and your term paper was graded 20, then your total is 86.0 or “B.” Your final letter grade will be based on the following grading scale:

Letter Grade = Score	Letter Grade = Score
A = 93-100	C = 73-76.999
A- = 90-92.999	C- = 70-72.999
B+ = 87-89.999	D+ = 67-69.999
B = 83-86.999	D = 60-66.999
B- = 80-82.999	F = < 60
C+ = 77-79.999	

* **PLEASE NOTE:** To be fair to everyone, we need to use these exact cutoffs. Under no circumstances can we change the grade of any one particular student.

GRADING CONCERNS

We strive to be as fair as possible in the grading. If you feel that a grade on an assignment or an exam is not fair, you must submit a type-written appeal (not via electronic mail) to Tatiana Tchoubar in which you fully explain the nature of the problem. You must submit your appeal for all exams/assignments within 1 week of receiving your grade. Please do not submit appeals in which you are not confident; there is always the chance that when the exam/assignment is re-examined, the grade will be lowered.

BLACKBOARD

You can access class information on-line at: <http://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>

For help see: <http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/blackboard>

For problems logging in, go to the helpdesk in the Main Library SINC Site or the Union SINC Site; you can also call: 631-632-9602 or e-mail: helpme@stonybrook.edu

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Students are continually engaged with other people's ideas: they read them in texts, hear them in lectures, discuss them in their classes, and incorporate them into their own writing. As a result, it is very important that each student give credit where it is due. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and all instances will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use another person's idea, opinion, or theory; any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings, or any other pieces of information, that are not common knowledge; quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words; or paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words. Citing all sources and putting direct quotations in quotation marks are required. For further information on plagiarism and the policies regarding academic dishonesty go to the Academic Judiciary website at <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/CAS/ajc.nsf>.

Course Content:

Course material accessed from Blackboard, SB Connect or a Stony Brook Course website is for the exclusive use of students who are currently enrolled in the course. Content from these systems cannot be reused or distributed without written permission of the instructor and/or the copyright holder.

Duplication of materials protected by copyright, without permission of the copyright holder is a violation of the Federal copyright law, as well as a violation of Stony Brook's Academic Integrity and Student Conduct Codes <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/policies.shtml> (you may have to copy and paste the address in a browser).

Special Needs:

If you have a physical, psychiatric, medical or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry out assigned course work, I would urge you to contact the staff in the Disabled Student Services office (DSS), Room 128, ECC, 632-6748/TDD. DSS will review your concerns and determine, with you, what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation of a disability is confidential.

Course Schedule

Dates	Content and Assignment Due	Mode
Week of May 30 – June 2	Read Syllabus. DE Foundations: Read textbook Chapters 1, 2 and 3	Blackboard Documents and Bb Discussion
Monday, June 5	Assign #1 due: Create a New Course in Bb Course Sites, Set Up the Instructor Home Page	Online Lecture in Blackboard Course Sites (recorded)
Week of June 5 – 9	DE Instructional Design: Read Ch 5, 6 and 7	Blackboard Discussion
Monday, June 12	Assign #2 due: Build Basic Content Menu of Your Course	Webinar in Bb Adobe Connect (SBConnect)
Week of June 12 - 16	DE Technologies: Read textbook Ch. 4 and 8	Blackboard Discussion
Monday, June 19	Assign #3 due: Design Modules of your Course	Online meeting in Google Hangouts
Week of June 19 - 23	DE Leadership: Read textbook Ch. 9, 10, 11, 12	Blackboard Discussion
Monday, June 26	Assign #4 due: Design an Assessment Tool, Publish Your Course, Invite and Manage Students	Online meeting in Skype
Week of June 26 - 30	Virtual worlds and total immersive environments (based on Bb Readings)	Blackboard Discussion
To be defined by Doodle poll	Final Project Presentations	Online in Bb Adobe Connect (SBConnect)
Week of July 3 – 7	Discussion about the benefits of Social Networking sites in Education (based on my MOOC in Bb Course Sites)	Pre-recorded lecture
Thursday, July 6	Assign #5 due: Comment on your classmates' Final Project presentations in VoiceThread	Submit via Bb
Monday July 10	Term paper due	Submit via Bb